Franklin-Southampton Area
Chamber of Commerce

2014
Legislative Priorities

The Franklin-Southampton Area Chamber of Commerce is strongly committed to regional cooperation and economic development. We work on behalf of our members and their employees to create the best possible business climate for our community. The following legislative priorities represent our key business concerns for the General Assembly's consideration:

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- ***SUPPORT*** initiatives to provide quality education and training resulting in a more skilled, productive workforce.
- ***SUPPORT*** Isle of Wight County and Franklin-Southampton economic development teams in order to maximize their ability to bring jobs & industry to the region.
- ***SUPPORT*** regional cooperation to ensure future success and growth and we call on local, state, and federal services to support us in every effort to create jobs and industry.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- ***SUPPORT*** restoration of funding to the Virginia Small Business Development Center Network, which provides vital support to area businesses.
- ***SUPPORT*** initiatives to increase Governor's Opportunity Fund for incentives to new & existing businesses.
- ***SUPPORT*** additional programs to assist entrepreneurs and small businesses and provide incentives to encourage growth & expansion of our existing manufacturing industry.
- ***SUPPORT*** Deerfield Correctional Center campus as the location of a Correctional Hospital if one is approved to be built in the state of VA to minimize jobs lost with the closing of Southampton Correctional Center.
- ***SUPPORT*** The budget amendment proposed by Roslyn Tyler to request a $50,000 appropriation on behalf of the Southampton County Historical Society to underwrite a portion of the final phase of the Rebecca Vaughan rehabilitation project. This will enable this property to serve as the visitor center for the Nat Turner Trail walking and driving tour and will enhance tourism in our area.

TRANSPORTATION

- ***SUPPORT*** funding to provide interchanges at Ivor and Windsor along the limited access interstate planned to parallel Route 460
- ***SUPPORT*** long-term solutions to meet critical transportation needs throughout the Commonwealth.
- ***SUPPORT*** revenue streams dedicated to the Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) approved projects.
- ***SUPPORT*** adequate funding for rural public transportation.
- ***OPPOSE*** fees designated to fund transportation that disproportionately targets the business community.

EDUCATION

- ***SUPPORT*** Paul D. Camp Community College's Legislative Agenda to accommodate the increasing demands for services to address the current economic downturn locally & regionally.
- ***SUPPORT*** full state funding of program mandates as prescribed by the Commonwealth to be implemented in the public school system. Adequate funding for existing education responsibilities must be a priority.
- ***SUPPORT*** education reform efforts that improve graduation rates & academic achievement.
- ***SUPPORT*** funding for Early Childhood Education to support the developmental needs of young children.

ENVIRONMENT

- ***SUPPORT*** and encourage collaboration between Virginia and US Government representatives to obtain resources that will implement a plan of action to alleviate flooding caused by the Chowan River basin.

HEALTHCARE

- ***SUPPORT*** greater control of healthcare costs and the investigation of new strategies to provide affordable healthcare to all citizens of the Commonwealth.
- ***SUPPORT*** legislation and programs that assist businesses, particularly small businesses, facilitate the health care needs of their employees.
- ***SUPPORT*** caps on medical malpractice liability awards.
- ***SUPPORT*** adequate funding for core aging services such as in home care and specialized transportation.

TAXATION

- ***SUPPORT*** a comprehensive tax reform that encourages economic growth and creates a pro-business climate that would ease the burden of taxation on small business.
- ***SUPPORT*** adopting a simple uniform taxing system.
- **OPPOSE** any measure that taxes businesses at a different level than residential property owners.

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Approved by Board of Directors 1-16-14